Reviewer’s report

Title: Development of a multiplex methylation-specific PCR as candidate triage test for women with an HPV-positive cervical scrape

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Reviewer: Hans-Ulrich Bernard

Reviewer’s report:

The search for molecular biomarkers that identify HPV positive cervical lesions with a high propensity for progressing to cancer has become a major field of research. DNA methylation is one of the subspecialties, and more than 50 candidate tumor suppressor genes that can become methylated during cervical carcinogenesis have been identified. This manuscript belongs to this field of research, and targets 3 known presumed tumor suppressor genes that have previously been reported to become methylated in cervical neoplasia. This manuscript is highly technical (i.e. does not report novel biological or clinical findings) and analyzes in multiplex PCR quantitatively the methylation of these 3 candidate tumor suppressor genes. Its specific value is to report that conditions can be optimized that allow to concomitantly measure the methylation of 3 genes, thereby presumably strengthening the usefulness of this type of molecular diagnosis.

This manuscript is technically interesting but biologically/clinically of minor relevance, and it is an editorial decision whether this kind of information fits into BMC Cancer.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

n/a